Missing package activity dates (invalid restarts)

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Applicable ChangeMan ZMF: Any ChangeMan ZMF release

Package activity dates are dates that are stored in ChangeMan ZMF's meta data (CMNPMAST), and which relate to events such as:

- When did this package enter the status FRZ, DIS, INS, BAS, etc.
- When did some target production site confirm that the package was distributed to that site, or installed in that site.

ChangeMan ZMF does a great job in (automatically) keeping track of all these dates. And these dates are also a great help when something goes wrong in production and you want to find out where the problem came from (typical scenario: some abend happens in production in program ABC10000, which appears to be installed just half an hour ago). Because of all these dates that ChangeMan ZMF tracks, it's a matter of minutes (seconds?) to find the link between the production abend and that ABC10000 program that changed.

But ChangeMan ZMF also verifies these dates prior to archiving a package (e.g. after it was installed in production for 1 year). And in case some of the required dates are missing, ChangeMan ZMF will not archive such package (it's like ChangeMan ZMF keeps waiting for some confirmation that still didn't come in).

The typical scenario for a package that has some of such dates missing (they never got registered in ChangeMan ZMF), is when some (routine) problem happens during the installation of a package in at least 1 target production site (e.g.: space problem, some DSN is missing, a DB2 bind failure, etc). Such problem can be perfectly handled by ChangeMan ZMF's restart facilities (e.g.: first fix the cause of the problem, then ask ChangeMan ZMF to restart from the failing job step).

However, if you're not experienced enough with ChangeMan ZMF (e.g. somebody from operations control who so now and then monitors ChangeMan ZMF installation jobs, and didn't attend any ChangeMan ZMF training such as Using ChangeMan ZMF - Operations control), there is a risk that the restart is not initiated correctly. E.g.: the failed job is marked as completed OK anyway, to get the rest of the ChangeMan ZMF jobs to execute. In such scenario, pretty sure that at least one of the package activity dates is missing. And that implies that, even though the package becomes in BAS status, it will not ever get archived (during ChangeMan ZMf housekeeping).

Reminder: if you're in a hurry (anxious) to get Dr.Chgman to deliver this item faster, consider contributing via the Z-Bounties program.

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